



"A WARD OF FRANCE" GIVEN AT WALLACK'S.

Viarda in "Deborah" at the Fifth Avenue, Revival at the Murray Hill.

"A WARD OF FRANCE," described as a dramatic and historical play, the work of Franklin Fyles and Eugene Presbrey, was well received last night at Wallack's, where it was presented for the first time in this city, with the following cast of characters:

Marquis de Casa Calvo, Spanish Governor of Louisiana..... Mr. Joseph Whiting
Jean Lafitte, the pirate..... Mr. Maurice Barrymore
George Villars, secret agent of the Emperor..... Mr. George Villars
Felix Laussat, Baron of France..... Mr. Henry Herman
Victor Laussat, his son..... Mr. Stephen Wright
Deleah, a French girl..... Mr. Max Figman
Father Angelo, a priest..... Mr. Stephen Wright
Delchano, a merchant..... Mr. Frank Cornell
Preston, Continental officer..... Mr. Frank Cornell
Seth Barnum, a backwoodsman..... Mr. Martin Cody
First Pirate..... Mr. Martin Cody
Jean Lafitte, a fortune teller..... Miss Ella Proctor Otis
Flower Moine, countess of Villars..... Miss Ella Proctor Otis
France..... Miss Una Abell
Madame Calvo, the Governor's wife..... Miss Una Abell

The scenes of the play are laid in New Orleans at the beginning of the present century. They deal with incidents attendant upon the picturesque and dramatic history of Louisiana at the time when that city passed through its successive stages of Spanish, French and American government. Real personages abound in every scene. The Spanish Governor, the French Envoy and Jean Lafitte, whose career on the Gulf of Mexico covered ten years of actual piracy, are all sketched from life.

Flower Moine, the Ward from whom the play takes its name, though a young girl of the French aristocracy, is exiled to Louisiana with a party of "Cassates," or criminals.

"Cassates," by the way, were, in early Creole days, women exiled to the French colonies because of irregularities while convent education and discipline had failed to overcome.

The play is built around the persecution and defense of the innocent Ward.

The prologue opens after the accession of Napoleon, with Felix Laussat (Henry Herman) rejoicing in his authority, and Flower Moine (Una Abell) still a pupil at a convent school of Havre.

Gray gowns and green foliage distinguish the opening of the prologue, which ends with a dramatic scene between the suffering mother and the villain Laussat.

It is made evident that Felix Laussat and the Marquis of Villars had in their youth made love. Sister Agnes (Mabel Bert), the former with success. After marriage, as a villain should, Laussat had tired of his wife's nobility, which interfered with his own dissonant political ambitions. Meanwhile the Marquis had married, and the fruit of his union was a daughter—the Ward.

The outbreak of the French Revolution the Marquis was condemned to death, and Laussat believes him to have been guillotined. With his son Victor he visits Louisiana. There the son falls in love with Flower.

Tableau No. 1—Death of Sister Agnes; her return to Laussat unrequited. The plot becomes more complicated in Act II, when the quadron fortune teller, Zabet, played by Ella Proctor Otis, in her gorgeous barbaric beads and brilliant flaglike draperies, with black wig and kerchiefed headgear, comes to the scene. Driven to the purpose of seeing how the old success was manifested but little interest, in spite of the fact that the management had made considerable expense in costuming cavaliers, soldiers and peasants in the dress used in France during the reign of Louis XV., in the year 1765.

But what the play was originally produced each and every one of the principal characters were interested to artists, who were personal favorites, and as a whole made a galaxy of stars that but few theatres in this or any other country could excel.

In this or any other country could excel. Flower Michel, the great part of the play, was in the hands of Mr. Stoddard, who made the murder scene one of the most characteristic that had up to that day been seen in New York. In fact, it took the town by storm and made it shudder.

In this scene, more than any other, came the change of the public he saw most vividly. Brutal murders, such as Pierre commits, in the middle of the stage, which is lighted now and then illuminated the room, are seen in almost every melodrama, and the harrowing situation of a mother, who sees her husband commit a murder and remains silent for the love of her daughter, has been to often played upon to make the heartstring vibrate.

In spite of this, however, the audience last evening frequently interrupted the play with applause, especially in the last act. In the gallery of the Montserrat Prison in the fifth act, which had been newly constructed for the occasion.

Viarda in "Deborah."

Alexander Viarda opened the third week of her engagement at the Fifth Avenue Theatre last night before a large audience in "Deborah." At the close of the short first act Madame Viarda was called three times before the curtain. In this country the play is better known as "Leah, the Forsaken." It is the first time, however, that the drama has been produced in this country with the principal role following the original role of the playwright. Judging from the conversation in the lobbies between acts, it was evident that a good half of the audience were German. On one point these German critics were unanimous—Madame Viarda's pronunciation is in the purest "Hochdeutsch," and marvelously distinct and altogether free from the provincialism of Southern Germany. "Sie spricht wie eine geborene Wienerin" (she speaks like a born Viennese) was the phrase heard in one group of Austrian admirers.

No Blushes for Charmion.

Laveria Charmion, who is said to have caused a furor in Europe and in the Antipodes by achieving the difficult of disrobing in midair, did not cause quite the sensation expected of her at Koster & Bial's last night.

After a large net had been stretched across the stage, Miss Charmion made her entrance clad in full street costume, accompanied by the catchy melody, "On Broadway," and the enthusiastic applause of the chaplains who were there to receive a shock and have something to tell the boys at the club on the morrow.

Ascending the swinging trapeze, the winsome little creature began a series of light acrobatic tricks, one of which caused her to hang head downward. Hereupon she proceeded to disrobe, which she did in a jiffy, appearing then in ordinary gymnast costume. The acrobatic feats that were most ordinary, but the audience treated her kindly. Anna Held will not suffer eclipse from her.

REVIVAL OF

"ROSE MICHEL."

De Koven and Smith's New Opera Given by the Broadway Theatre Company.

The old time success "Rose Michel," which had a protracted run when first seen at the Union Square Theatre, in the days of the A. M. Palmer management, was last evening revived at the Murray Hill Theatre, with Rose Eytting in the title role and McKee Rankin as Pierre Michel. Miss Eytting played the same role in the original production, and many who had seen her then said last evening that she had not perceptibly altered, and that her rendition of the part was in every way as finely cut as then.

"Rose Michel" belongs to the series of plays which Mr. Palmer acquired from the French and which were so deftly adapted by the late Mr. A. R. Cazauban, who did not make a servile translation, but made them fit the popular taste of New York of that day, even if he had to change the scene radically.

Popular taste, however, changes quickly in New York, and the many who attended the presentation last evening more for the purpose of seeing how the old success was manifested but little interest, in spite of the fact that the management had made considerable expense in costuming cavaliers, soldiers and peasants in the dress used in France during the reign of Louis XV., in the year 1765.

But what the play was originally produced each and every one of the principal characters were interested to artists, who were personal favorites, and as a whole made a galaxy of stars that but few theatres in this or any other country could excel. Flower Michel, the great part of the play, was in the hands of Mr. Stoddard, who made the murder scene one of the most characteristic that had up to that day been seen in New York. In fact, it took the town by storm and made it shudder.

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A Maybrick Sketch.

Gertrude Norman, an English actress now residing in this city, has had written for her by Kenneth Lee a sketch entitled "Caged: an Episode in the Life in Death of Florence Maybrick," which she intends to present in the vaudeville theatres of the country outside of New York to promote a scheme of getting released, to a petition for Mrs. Maybrick's release.



"THE HIGHWAYMAN" APPEALS TO A NEW YORK AUDIENCE.

De Koven and Smith's New Opera Given by the Broadway Theatre Company.

By Alan Dale.

YOU need not be in the least afraid to read what I am going to say about "The Highwayman," the new De Koven-Smith comic opera, that had its first metropolitan presentation at the Broadway Theatre last night, for I hereby swear solemnly to absolutely avoid using the word "reminiscent." Consider it erased from my vocabulary. De Koven has taken a long holiday, simply driven away by the horror of reminiscence. He has come back to us at last, and it is our excessive duty to forget that he has been unfortunate enough to have appeared success early. Give Regie a chance, mes freres. Let's forget what he has done. Let's remember that he is still doing.

"The Highwayman" is all Reginald De Koven. To be sure, Harry B. Smith is the librettist, but, as Mr. Smith grinds out comic opera books two or three times a month, I am sure that on this occasion he will allow poor Regie a pre-eminence. Mr. Smith must be a rich man. If he sells each comic opera at \$1 a piece, his bank account cannot be far from \$100,000. Mr. De Koven can spend a week's royalties in Christmas presents and still feel that he not unduly extravagant.

Harry B. Smith's inexhaustible comic opera mill has turned out a highly "legitimate" book. The story of "The Highwayman" is a good one, well told. It has the simple qualities of comprehension that endears the dime novelette to the little messenger boy. The dashing highwayman, an "Irish soldier of fortune," the lovely and heroic Lady Constance Sinclair, who loves him; the haughty papa, the soubrette, the humorous Constable Quiller, and the ineffectual Captain Redney, are all brought together in a series of complications. Occasionally these complications grow a trifle too thick. Mr. Smith is easily involved, but, take it all in all, the story of "The Highwayman" is real comic opera. If librettists only knew it, they could get their best comic operas from the penny dreadful. Most of those snugly typed publications, set to music, would be extremely valuable.

The best "situation" in the comic opera is the "holding up" of a stage coach by Lady Constance, disguised at the notorious highwayman Captain Swift. This she undertakes in order to secure, not a will, but a pardon for her lover, that is temporarily owned by his enemy. And Mr. Smith has

introduced one comedy part—that of Constable Quiller, who seems to satirize the penny, dreadful type—that is completely clever. In fact, this librettist, although he does so much work that nobody can for a moment imagine that he is inspired, has done himself proud in "The Highwayman." There is comedian to sit on a nail, no abominable, flannel voiced funny man to introduce political "gags" and horribly irrelevant topicalities. This libretto has "a full star to fit; no exacting lady with high notes to be exhibited, to worry about; no particular, lense-lighted artist to vex his soul.

"The Highwayman" is composed for a well regulated company. At the Broadway, it has secured the best organization, that we have had since the days when the Bostonians were young—I beg their pardon, younger. It is a flawless cast, reverently put together, and a far more amiable work would have succeeded with such a host of clever interpreters. Mr. De Koven can thank the Broadway Theatre Opera Company, as the organization is called. He can spend a week's royalties in Christmas presents and still feel that he not unduly extravagant.

Little Miss Hilda Clark—the "little" is merely a term of endearment—was agreeably successful. Miss Clark is as pretty as at least two pictures, and an unassuming wit. Nobody seems to have told her that she is charming, and the effect of this lack of self-consciousness is most pleasing. Miss Clark sings very prettily, and although she manifested a tendency to pyrotechnics, she can scarcely be blamed. She will grow out of that tendency. It took Lillian Russell ten years to make over her vocal fireworks to Melba and Emma Eames.

Jerome Sykes, as the genuinely funny Quiller, made a most emphatic hit, and never overdid the role assigned to him. It was a part that might easily have been exaggerated, and Mr. Sykes deserves to be complimented. His managers should also see that all laudatory criticisms are kept away from him. They are very dangerous.

Three Theatres Change Hands. San Francisco, Dec. 13.—Friedlander, Gottlieb & Co., proprietors of the Columbia Theatre, have signed papers giving them full control of the Baldwin and California theatres in this city, and the MacDonough Theatre in Oakland. They claim to be independent of the Eastern Syndicate.

At the Metropolis Theatre Thomas Shea pleased the Haricmites, as he had previously pleased the West Siders and East Siders, with his melodrama of International diplomacy called, "The Man of War's Man." The number who were unable to gain admission to the theatre was even larger than that turned away on Mr. Shea's opening night at the Grand Opera House.

The best society of the northwestern corner of the city packed the Harlem Opera House last night, where the Empire Theatre Stock Company opened a week's engagement in "Under the Red Robe."

Charles Leonard Fletcher, surrounded by a company satisfactory to last night's audience at the People's Theatre, began a week's engagement in "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde."

In "Darkest America," presented at the Third Avenue Theatre last evening, by the company of the People's Theatre, were several changes of scenery, when all the lights on the stage are turned off, while the scene-shifters are busy rearranging the stage, and the people to go on, are huddled in a corner to be pushed on the stage, before the lights are again turned on. In this Egyptian darkness every one has to know his or her exact place, and a mistake is fatal. Julius Cohn, who manages the play for Mr. Frohman, became painfully aware of this last evening. He had sauntered back of the curtain, to pay a bill, and was well on the stage when the dark change was ordered. Of course he could not see his own hands, and concluded to remain perfectly still until the light came.

"FAUST" IN ENGLISH AT THE GARDEN THEATRE.

"The Cat and the Cherub" and Other New Things in Vaudeville.

GOUNOD'S "Faust" was given in English at the Garden Theatre last night by the Madison Square Opera Company, the parts being distributed as follows:

Faust.....Edward Wareham
Mefistofele.....Frank Cell
Valentine.....Warwick Gannor
Wagner.....John Rand
Margaret.....Fathal Ward
Sibbel.....Maud Berry
Maria.....Row Leighton

The occasion was interesting, inasmuch as it was the first performance in this country of the operatic company electing to be known by that name. Most of the artists, if not all, were unknown to the New York public, and the appearance of some of them was awaited with considerable curiosity, particularly those singers hailing from England and making their first bow in a city that patronizes German and Italian opera.

The voices of the chorus, which numbered fifty, were fresh and well-trained, and the costumes were bright and pretty. Among the artists, one of the most noted was Mr. Frank Cell, who comes from England, where he was for many years connected with the famous Carl Rosa English Opera Company. The audience took to Mr. Cell and his melodious voice, and he was warmly greeted on his entry as Mefistofele. Edward Wareham, as Faust, wearing no wig and acting rather coldly, still gained the applause of the audience by his singing, and at the end of the act with Margaret in the third act, he received a recall. Mr. Warwick Gannor made a picturesque and melodious Valentine.

As Margherita Miss Fatmah Dind gave a quiet and winsome impersonation of Gounod's heroine and proved she was the possessor of a sweet voice. In the jewel scene she acted charmingly and sang the delicious music to much applause. The Sibbel of Miss Maud Berry was artistic, her singing of "Gentle Flowers in the Dew" being loudly recommended.

At the Combination Houses.

"Chimble Fadden" came back to the scene of one of his old successes at the Star Theatre last night, apparently none the worse for wear or age, and will be seen there all the week.

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Joke Was on Mr. Cohn.

In the production of "The White Heather," at the Academy of Music, are several changes of scenery, when all the lights on the stage are turned off, while the scene-shifters are busy rearranging the stage, and the people to go on, are huddled in a corner to be pushed on the stage, before the lights are again turned on. In this Egyptian darkness every one has to know his or her exact place, and a mistake is fatal. Julius Cohn, who manages the play for Mr. Frohman, became painfully aware of this last evening. He had sauntered back of the curtain, to pay a bill, and was well on the stage when the dark change was ordered. Of course he could not see his own hands, and concluded to remain perfectly still until the light came.

Unfortunately, however, he stood in the exact spot where a supernumerary ought to have stood, and before he knew anything he had been pushed on the stage just as the electric lights flashed again, and he was discovered with a bill in one hand, and his silk hat in the other. Mr. Cohn says he will not again go back of the curtain, and intimates that the "accident" was a "job."

AMONG THE VAUDEVILLIANS.

"The Cat and the Cherub" is now an appreciated vaudeville feature at Proctor's, where it vies for applause with Clara Morris in her clever one-act play, "Blind Justice." Other attractive features were Maxwell and Simpson, Hugh Stanton and Pauline Willard, Annie Whitney and Adelaide Crawford.

At Weber & Fields's Music Hall last night Lew Dockstader revived the "animated sheet music" idea, which he claims was in use in his minstrel show some years ago. Anna Held at Koster & Bial's thus has no longer a monopoly of the clever trick which heightens the effects of her solo hits. The farce "Pousse Cafe" still continues to display its bright colors, and its witticisms to crowded houses.

At the Pleasure Palace, Elizabeth Lawrence, better known as the Baroness Blanche, made her first appearance since her return from the Folies Bergere, and gave evidence of having made good use of her short Parisian tuition in experience. The audience seemed well entertained by her. Charles W. Miller, the winner of the cycle race of last week, allowed the crowd to lionize him, and bore his honors modestly. Rawson and June, boomerang throwers; Edna Collins, a clever whistler, and Joe Cavellane, the comedian and misanthrope, must have been pleased with the reception they received.

Gautier's daring equestrian performance created a sensation at Keith's yesterday. On an unruffled elevated platform, fifteen feet in diameter, he put a highly spirited horse through all the known paces, and, strange to say, did not break his neck nor injure the horse. Many a sigh of relief was heard when the act was finished. Mr. Rudloff, the Parisian mimic, who made his American debut, was received with acclamation. He proved himself to be an exceedingly versatile entertainer. Georgia Gardner and Edgar Ely were seen for the first time in a bright new sketch, and Gertie Cochran, the little Western girl with the prodigious memory, surprised everybody by her remarkable performance.

Margaret Webb, although not programmed in the black type generally used to denote the star features, surprised both the audience and the management at Tony Pastor's yesterday by her brilliant vocal work. The reception accorded her after the rendition of her first song was very flattering. She was forced to bow repeatedly. Her second song, "The Four Corners," who presented their bright and snappy one-act farce, "Money to Burn," to continuous applause and laughter. Their rendition of "Kitty's History" their debut in a novel act full of spiky dialogue and catchy songs. One song, "A Policeman's Duty," caught the fancy of the audience. It was sung by Mr. Emmett, in the character of a guardian of the law, with many novel effects.

An elaborate wagon, representing Uncle Sam, Miss Manhattan and Miss Brooklyn at a feast, will be exhibited at the Eden Musee in a few days. It will be named Greater New York. The table will be sumptuously loaded with vands and the chief piece will be a huge turkey labelled New York.

Helen Coggage, who is fasting for sixty days at Huber's Museum, is getting thinner and thinner every day, but she still smiles cheerfully and vows she will win her wager. A food show is on exhibition in the curio hall, and while it interests others, it has no charms for Miss Coggage. The Great Dances and an up-to-date variety entertainment are also responsible for the crowded condition of the museum night and day.

Man Wants but little here below, but he wants it quick. How about a little Journal "Wants" that brings quick results? 1,768 more printed last Sunday than same Sunday last year.